

ONE WORKER PREPARING FOR ANOTHER

NO. 2261

A SERMON
INTENDED FOR READING ON LORD'S-DAY, JUNE 19, 1892
DELIVERED BY C. H. SPURGEON
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON
ON THURSDAY EVENING, AUGUST 14, 1890

THIS sermon is intended for reading on *the first anniversary of the beloved preacher's birthday since his death*. While he was with us, he always looked for special contributions for the Stockwell Orphanage at this season. He did not seek birthday presents for himself; but he desired that all friends, who wished to show their love to him, would do so by helping to maintain his fatherless family of five hundred children.

We trust that no one will allow this useful institution to suffer because *his* voice can no longer plead for it; but that, through this sermon, each reader will hear him saying, "Dear friend, the Orphanage still needs your loving and generous assistance; thou hast often helped it by thy gifts in the past, *and thou mayest add hereto*; or if thou hast not hitherto given to it, others have, *and thou mayest add thereto*."

Contributions will be gratefully received by the Treasurer, Spurgeon's Orphan Home, Stockwell Orphanage, Clapham Road, London. Collecting-cards and boxes may be obtained of the Secretary. The *Annual Festival* will be held on *Wednesday afternoon and evening, June 22nd*. All friends are invited to be present.

"Now, behold, in my trouble I have prepared for the house of the LORD an hundred thousand talents of gold, and a thousand thousand talents of silver; and of brass and iron without weight; for it is in abundance: timber also and stone have I prepared; and thou mayest add thereto."
1 Chronicles 22: 14

THE building of the temple is an admirable type of the building of the church of God. I am afraid that there are some present with us at this time who have never helped to build the spiritual temple for Christ. They are not, themselves, living stones. They are no part of God's spiritual house, and they have never helped to bring their cedar, or iron, or gold to the great Builder of the church. In fact, there may be some here who have rather helped to pull it down, some who have delighted to throw away the stones, and who have tried to hide from the divine Builder the precious material which He intends to use in the sacred edifice.

Judge your own hearts, and if you cannot say that you are a living stone, if you have not helped to build up the church of Christ, may you repent of your sin, and may the grace of God convert you! But if you are workers for the Lord, if your hearts are right with God, I think that I shall be able to say some things that will encourage you to work on, even if you should not for a time see any immediate results from your work.

There were many who helped to build the temple, David gathering the materials, Solomon, the master mason, by whose name the temple would afterwards be called, the princes helping him in the great work, strangers, foreigners, and aliens, who dwelt throughout Israel and Judah, these all took their share, and even the Tyrians and Zidonians had a part in the work.

Now we have here many ministers of God and students, Davids and Solomons, but I pray that many, who are strangers as yet, may be enlisted in this holy service by our great Lord and King, and that some, who are farthest off from Christ, Tyrians and Zidonians, who have gone far away from God, may be enabled, by divine grace, to contribute their share to this glorious work of building a house for the living God, a house not made of gold, and silver, and stone, and timber, but a spiritual house for the indwelling of the Holy Spirit.

I. In considering our text, let us notice, first, that DAVID HAD ZEALOUSLY DONE HIS PART, although he might not build the temple.

There are many servants of God whose names are little known, who, nevertheless, are doing a work that is essential to the building up of the church of God. I have known many such, who have never lived to realize any great success, their names have never been written upon any great temples that have been built, but nevertheless, they have worthily done their part, even as David did.

You see, then, first, that *David had gathered the materials*. Many a man collects people together, and yet he has not the fashioning of them. He is the founder of a Christian congregation, but he does not live to see many conversions. He gets together the raw materials upon which another shall work. He ploughs and he sows, but it wants another man to come and water the seed, and perhaps another to gather the harvest. Still, the sower did his work, and deserves to be remembered for what he did. David did his part of the work, in getting together the materials for the temple.

Besides which, *he fashioned some of the materials*. He had the stone cut from the quarry, and many of them shaped to take their places, by and by, in silence in the temple, when it should be reared without sound of hammer or axe. So there are teachers and preachers who help to form the characters of their scholars and hearers, by working away upon their minds and hearts. They will never build up a great church, but still they are knocking the rough edges off the stones. They are preparing and fashioning them, and by and by the builder will come and make good use of them.

David had prepared the way for Solomon's temple. It was by his fighting that the time of peace came, in which the temple could be erected. Though he is called a man of blood, yet it was needful that the foes of Israel should be overthrown. There could be no peace till her adversaries had been crushed, and David did that.

You do not hear much about the men who prepare the way for others. Somebody else comes along, and apparently does all the work, and his name is widely known and honored, but God remembers the heralds, the pioneers, the men who prepare the way, the men who, by casting out devils, routing grievous errors, and working needful reforms, prepare the way for the triumphal progress of the Gospel.

Moreover, *David found the site for the temple*. He discovered it, he purchased it, and he handed it over to Solomon. We do not always remember the men who prepare the sites for the Lord's temples. Luther is rightly remembered, but there were Reformers before Luther. There were hundreds of men and women who were burned for Christ, or who perished in prison, or who were put to cruel deaths for the Gospel.

Luther comes when the occasion has been made for him, and when a site has been cleared for him upon which to build the temple of God. But God remembers all those pre-Reformation heroes. It may be your lot, dear friend, to clear the site, and to make the occasion for others, and you may die before you see even a cornerstone of your own work laid, for it will be yours when it is finished, and God will remember what you have done.

Further, *it was David who received the plans from God*. The Lord wrote upon his heart what He would have done. He told him, even to the weight of the candlesticks and lamps, everything that was to be arranged. Solomon, wise as he was, did not plan the temple. He had to borrow the designs from his father, who received them directly from God.

Many a man is far-seeing, he gets the plan of the Gospel into his heart, he sees a way in which great things can be done, and yet he is scarcely permitted to put his own hands to the work. Another will come by and by, and will carry out the plan that the first one received, but we must not forget the first man, who went into the secret place of the Most High, and learned in the place of thunder what God would have His people do.

David did one thing more, before he died, *he gave a solemn charge to others*, he charged Solomon, the princes, and all the people, to carry out the work of building the temple. I revere the man who, in his old age, when there is weight in every syllable that he utters, concludes his life by urging others to carry on the work of Christ. It is something to gather about your last bed young men who have years of

usefulness before them, and to lay upon their consciousness and their heart the duty of preaching Christ crucified, and winning the souls of men for the Lord.

So you see that David had done his part toward the building of the temple. I should like to ask every believer here, *Have you done your part?* You are a child of God, God has loved you, and chosen you, you have been redeemed with precious blood. You know better than to think of working in order to save yourself, you are saved, but have you diligently done all that you can do for your Lord and Master?

It was well said, in the prayer meeting before this service, that there are several thousand members of this church who could not preach, and there were some who did preach of whom the same thing might be said, for it is poor preaching, after all, and our brother said in prayer, "Lord, help us who cannot preach, to pray for the man who does!" Have you, dear friend, who cannot preach, made a point of praying for the pastor of the church to which you belong? It is a great sin on the part of church members if they do not daily sustain their pastor by their prayers.

Then there is much else that you can do for Christ, in your family, in your business, and in the neighborhood where you live. Could you go to bed tonight, and there close your eyes for the last time, feeling, "I have finished the work which God gave me to do. I have done all that I could for the winning of souls"?

I am afraid that I address some who have a talent wrapped in a napkin, hidden away in the earth. My dear man, go home, and dig it up, before it gets altogether covered with rust, to bear witness against you. Take it up, and put it out to heavenly interest, that your Lord may have what He is entitled to receive. O Christian men and women, there must be very much unused energy in the Church of God! We have a great dynamo that is never used. Oh, that each one would do his own part, even as David did his!

We shall soon be gone, our day lasts not very long. "The night cometh when no man can work." Shall it be said of you, or of me, that we wasted our daylight, and then, when the evening shadows came, we were uneasy and unhappy, and though saved by divine grace, we died with sad expressions of regret for wasted opportunities?

It is not very long ago that I sat by the bedside of one who was wealthy, I might say very wealthy. I prayed with him. I had hoped to have found him rejoicing in the Lord, for I knew that he was a child of God, but he was a child of God with a little malformation about the fingers. He could never open his hand as he ought to have done. As I sat by his side, he said, "Pray God, with all your might, that I may live three months, that I may have the opportunity of using my wealth in the cause of Christ."

He did not live much more than three hours after he said that. Oh, that he had woke up a little sooner to do for the Master's church and cause what he ought to have done! Then he would not have had that regret to trouble him in his last hours. He knew the value of the precious blood, and he was resting in it, and I had great joy in knowing that all his hope and all his trust were in his Lord, and he was saved, but it was with a great deal of regret and trembling. I would spare any of you who have wealth such trouble on your dying bed.

If there is a young man here, who has the ability to preach the Gospel, or to be doing something for Christ, but he is doing nothing, I am sure that it will be a pain to him one of these days. When conscience is thoroughly aroused, and his heart is getting nearer to God than it has been, he will bitterly regret that he did not avail himself of every occasion to talk of Christ, and seek to bring souls to Him. I should like these practical thoughts to go round these galleries, and through this area, till some men and women shall say, "We have not done our part, as David did, but by God's grace, we will do so, and He shall have all the praise."

That is my first head, then—David had zealously done his part.

II. But secondly, there is a remarkable fact in the text, DAVID HAD DONE HIS PART IN TROUBLE.

Read it, "Now, behold, in my trouble I have prepared for the House of the Lord an hundred thousand talents of gold," and so on. In the margin of your Bibles, you will find the words, "in my poverty." It is strange that David should talk about poverty when his gifts amounted to many millions of pounds.

David thought little of what he had prepared. He calls it poverty, I think, because it is the way of the saints to count anything that they do for God to be very little. The most generous men in the world think the least of what they give to God's cause. David, with his millions that he gives, says, "In my poverty I have prepared for the house of the LORD."

As he looked at the gold and silver, he said to himself, "What is all this to God?" And the brass and the iron, that could not be reckoned, it was so much and so costly, he thought it was all nothing to JEHOVAH, who fills heaven and earth, whose grandeur and glory are altogether unspeakable. If you have done the most that you can for God, you will sit down, and weep that you cannot do ten times as much. You that do little for the Lord will be like a hen with one chick, you will think a great deal of it. But if you have a great number of works, and you are doing much for Christ, you will wish that you could do a hundred times as much. Your song will be—

***"Oh, for a thousand tongues to sing
My great Redeemer's praise!"***

Oh, to be multiplied a thousand-fold, that we might, anywhere and everywhere, serve Jesus with heart, and mind, and soul, and strength! So David here considers that what he did was very little.

Yet, *it was proof of his sincerity.* That he should be saving all this wealth, and preparing for the house of his God in the time of trouble, was a proof of great sincerity. Some Christians want to have all sunshiny weather, and the birds must sing all day and all night to please them. If they receive a rebuke, or somebody seems a little cold to them, they will do no more.

I have seen many, who called themselves Christians, who were like a silly child at play, who says, when something offends him, "I won't play anymore." They run away at the first rough word that they hear. But David, in the day of his trouble, when his heart was ready to break, still went on with his great work of providing for the house of God. Some who have attended this house of prayer have been absent, and when we have inquired the reason, they have said that they had become so poor that they did not like to come.

Oh, dear friends, we would like to see you, however poor you are! Why, if you are in trouble, you should come all the more, for where could you go to find comfort better than to the house of God? Never, I pray you, stay away on account of poverty. David said that he had prepared for the house of his God in the time of his trouble, and that proved his sincerity.

One said to me, "Ever since I have been a Christian, everything has seemed to go wrong with me." Suppose that everything should be taken away from you, should you not be grateful that you have an eternal treasure in heaven, and that these losses, which might have broken your heart if you had not known the Savior, are now sent in heavenly discipline to you, and are working for your good? It shows that a man is right with God when he can walk with Christ in the mire and in the slough. God does not want you to wear silver slippers, and to walk on a well-mown, well-rolled grassy lawn, all the way to heaven.

David prepared for the house of the Lord in his trouble, and I have no doubt that *it was a salve to his sorrow.* To have something to do for Jesus, and to go right on with it, is one of the best ways to get over a bereavement, or any heavy mental depression. If you can pursue some great objective, you will not feel that you are living for nothing. You will not sit down in despair, for, whatever your trouble may be, you will still have this to live for, "I want to help in building the church of God, and I will do my part in it whatever happens to me. Come poverty or wealth, come sickness or health, come life or death, as long as there is breath in my body, I will go on with the work that God has given me to do."

Do I speak to any who are in great trouble? If you are a Christian, the best advice that I can give you is this, get to work for Christ, and you will forget your trouble. If you are not a Christian, I advise you to trust the Savior at once, for He is the only solace of spiritual sorrow.

Again, *it was an incentive to service* when David, in his trouble, prepared for the house of the Lord. There were many things in trouble that would tend to dampen his ardor, and make him feel as if he could not hold on any longer, but he said to himself, "I must go on with this work for God. His temple must be 'exceedingly magnificent,' and my son Solomon must build it, so I must go on gathering the materials." So he just roused himself afresh, and went on with his work with new earnestness, whenever his trouble would otherwise have depressed him.

It must also have given an elevation to David's whole life. To have a noble purpose, and to pursue that purpose with all your might, prevents your being like "dumb driven cattle," and lifts you out of the mist and fog of the valley, and sets your feet upon the hilltop, where you can commune with God. I would suggest to our younger friends that they should begin their Christian life with a high purpose, and that they should never forget that purpose, and if trouble should come, they should say, "Let it come; my face is set, like a flint, to do this work to which my LORD has called me, and I will pursue it with all my might."

It may seem as if there were no spiritual help in such advice as this, but believe me, there is. If God shall give you grace to go on with your lifework, He will thereby give you grace to overcome your life trouble.

You who would be like your Master, ask not to have a smooth path, and great success. Remember what a life of sorrow He lived. He was grief's close acquaintance. Yet although He saw but a small church rising before His bodily eye, He knew that He was doing the work that God had given Him to do, and He went on with it through agony and bloody sweat, through shame and spitting.

He was not more in earnest when He rode in state through the streets of Jerusalem than He was when he hung on the cross of Calvary. He was resolved to do His work, and in trouble He did it, and He amassed treasure beyond all conception for the building of His church. Riches of grace and wonders of glory He gathered together by His suffering and His death.

If you would be like your Lord, you must be able to say with David, "Behold, in my trouble, I have prepared for the house of the LORD." God give His troubled ones to enter into fellowship with the Lord Jesus Christ in this respect!

III. I am glad that I have come to my third point, for my strength well-nigh fails me. What I have to say here is this, DAVID'S WORK FITS ON TO THE WORK OF ANOTHER.

That should be a great joy to some of you who do not see much coming of what you are doing. Your work is going to fit on to somebody else's work.

This is *the order of God's providence* in His church. It does not happen that He gives a whole piece of work to one man, but He seems to say to him, "You go and do so much, then I will send somebody else to do the rest." How this ought to cheer some of you up, the thought that your work may be no failure, though in itself it may seem to be so, because it fits on to the work of somebody else who is coming after you, and so it will be very far from a failure!

You have sometimes seen a man take a contract to put in the foundations of a house, and to carry it up to a certain height. He has done that, he will not be the builder of that house, that will be the work of the next contractor, who carries up the walls, puts on the roof, and so forth. Yes, but he who did the foundation work did a great deal, and he is as much the builder of the house as the man who carries up the walls. So, if you go to a country town or village, and you preach the Gospel to a few poor folk, you may never have seemed very successful, but you have been preparing the way for somebody else who is coming after you.

I am told that my venerable predecessor, Dr. Rippon, used often, in his pulpit, to pray for somebody, of whom he knew nothing, who would follow him in the ministry of the church, and greatly increase it. He seemed to have in his mind's eye some young man, who, in after years, would greatly enlarge the number of the flock, and he often prayed for him. He died, and passed away to heaven, about the time that I was born. Older members of the church have told me that they have read the answer to Dr. Rippon's prayers in the blessing that has been given to us these many years.

If you keep your eyes open, you will see the same thing happen again. You will notice how one shall do his work, which shall be necessary to some larger work that somebody else will do after him. This is God's way, so that the second man, the Solomon coming after David, may do his work all the better because of what his father has done before him.

Solomon had not to spend years in collecting the materials for the temple, he might not have got through the building if he had had that task. His good old father had done all that for him, and all that he had to do was to spend the money that David had gathered, work up the gold, and silver, and brass, and iron, bring in the big stones, and put them in their places, and build the house for God. I daresay that Solomon often thought gratefully of his father, David, and what he had done, and you and I, if God blesses us, ought always to think with thanksgiving of the Davids who went before us.

If you have success in your class, my sister, remember that there was an excellent Christian woman who had the class before you. You come, young man, into the Sunday school, and you think that you must be somebody very great because you have had several conversions in your class. How about the brother who had given up the class through ill-health? You took his place, who knows which of you will have the honor at the last great day?

I was about to say, Who cares? for we do not live for honor, we live to serve God, and if I can serve God best by digging out the cellar, and you can serve God best by throwing out that ornamental bay window, my brother, you go on with your bay window, and I will go on with my cellar, for what matters it what we do so long as the house is built, and God is glorified thereby? It is the way of God in providence to set one man to do part of a work which pieces on to that of another man.

But *this is a terrible blow at self*. Self says, "I like to begin something of my own, and I like to carry it out, I do not want any interference from other people." A friend proposed, the other day, to give you a little help in your service. You looked at him as if he had been a thief. You do not want any help, you are quite up to the mark, you are like a wagon and four horses, and a dog under the wagon as well! There is everything about you that is wanted, you need no help from anybody, you can do all things almost without the help of God!

I am very sorry for you if that is your opinion. If you get into God's service, He may say to you, "You shall never begin anything, but shall always come in as the second man," or "You shall never finish anything, you shall always be getting ready for somebody else." It is well to have an ambition not to build upon another man's foundation, but do not carry that idea too far. If there is a good foundation laid by another man, and you can finish the structure, be thankful that he has done his part, and rejoice that you are permitted to carry on his work. It is God's way of striking a blow at your personal pride by allowing one man's work to fit on to another's.

I believe that *it is good for the work to have a change of workers*. I am glad that David did not live any longer, for he could not have built the temple. David must die. He has had a good time of service. He has gathered all the materials for the temple. Solomon comes, with young blood and youthful vigor, and carries on the work.

Sometimes, the best thing that some of us old folk can do is to go home, and go to heaven, and let some younger man come, and do our work. I know that there are great many lamentations about the death of Dr. So-and-so, and Mr. So-and-so, but why? Do you not think that, after all, God can find as good men as those that He has found already? He made those good men, and He is not short of power, He can make others just as good as they have been.

I was present at a funeral, where I heard a prayer that rather shocked me. Some brother had said that God could raise up another minister equal to the one that was in the coffin, but prayer was offered by another man, who said that this preacher had been eyes to his blindness, feet to his lameness, and I do not know what beside, and then he said, "Thy poor unworthy dust does not think that Thou ever canst or wilt raise up another man like him." So he had not an omnipotent God, but you and I have, and with an omnipotent God, it is for the good of the work that David should go to his rest, and that Solomon should come in, and carry on the work.

Certainly, *this creates unity in the church of God*. If we all had a work of our own, and were shut up to do it, we should not know one another, but now I cannot do my work without your help, my dear friends, and in some respects, you cannot do your work without my help. We are members, one of another, and one helps the other. I hope that I shall never have to do without you. God bless you for all your efficient help! In many Christian works you will have to do without me, one of these days, but that will not matter. There will be somebody who will carry on the work of the Lord, and so long as the work goes on, what matter who does it? God buries the workman, but the devil himself cannot bury the work.

The work is everlasting, though the workmen die. We pass away, as star by star grows dim, but the eternal light is never fading. God shall have the victory. His Son shall come in His glory. His Spirit shall be poured out among the people, and though it be neither this man, nor that, nor the other, God will find the man to the world's end who will carry on His cause, and give Him the glory.

This leaves a place for those who come after. One thing David said to Solomon I like very much, "Thou mayest add thereto." I have quoted that sometimes when the collection has been rather small. I have said to each of our friends who were counting the money, "Thou mayest add thereto." It is not at all a bad text for a collection sermon, but it may also be used in many other ways.

Here are certain preachers of the Gospel. Cannot I put my hand on some young man's shoulder, and say to him, "Thou mayest add thereto; thou hast a good voice, thou hast an active brain, begin to speak for God, there are numbers of godly men in the Gospel ministry, if thou art called of God, thou mayest add thereto." We have a good Sunday school, though some of you have never seen it. We have a number of loving and earnest teachers, "Thou mayest add thereto." Go thou, and teach likewise, or engage in some other work for which the Lord has qualified you.

I wonder whether there is an unconverted man here this evening, or an unconverted woman, whom God has ordained to bless, and to whom He will speak tonight, some stranger whom He will bring in by His almighty grace, some servant of the devil who shall tonight be made a servant of Christ? My Master has a large number of servants, "Thou may add thereto." If you will yield yourself to Christ, you may come, and help God's people.

We need recruits, we are always wanting them. May God lead some, who have been on the side of sin and self, to come out, and say, "Set my name down among God's people. By the grace of God, I am going to be on Christ's side, and help to build His temple." Come along, my brother, come along, my sister, we are glad for your help. The work is not all done yet, you are not too late to fight the Lord's battles, nor to win the crown of the victors. The Lord has a large army of the soldiers of the cross, and "thou mayest add thereto." God save you! Christ bless you! The Spirit inspire you! May it be so with very many, for Christ's sake! Amen.

EXPOSITION BY C. H. SPURGEON

1 CHRONICLES 21:25-30 AND 22

David was commanded to go to Ornan, or Araunah, the Jebusite, to rear an altar unto the Lord in his threshing floor. There had been a terrible plague in Jerusalem, in consequence of David's great sin in numbering the people, and they were falling by the thousands by the sword of the angel of vengeance. David went up to the threshing floor of Ornan on Mount Moriah. Ornan was willing to give it to him, but he determined to buy it. We read in the twenty-fifth verse—

1 Chronicles Chapter 21. Verses 25-28. *So David gave to Ornan for the place six hundred shekels of gold by weight. And David built there an altar unto the LORD, and offered burnt offerings and peace offerings, and called upon the LORD; and he answered him from heaven by fire upon the altar of burnt offering. And the LORD commanded the angel; and he put up his sword again into the sheath thereof.*

At that time when David saw that the LORD had answered him in the threshing floor of Ornan the Jebusite, then he sacrificed there.

There was the place for the temple, where the angel sheathed his sword. Christ Jesus, in His great atonement, is the corner stone of the temple where divine justice sheathes its sword. There let the house of God be built. Every true church of God is founded on the glorious doctrine of the atoning sacrifice. It was a threshing floor, too, and God has built His church on a threshing floor. Depend upon it, the flail will always be going in every true church, to fetch out the wheat from the chaff. We must have tribulation if we are in the church of God. The threshing floor will always be needed until we are taken up to the heavenly garner above.

29-30 and 1 Chronicles Chapter 22. Verse 1. *For the tabernacle of the LORD, which Moses made in the wilderness, and the altar of the burnt offering, were at the season in the high places of Gibeon. But David could not go before it to inquire of God: for he was afraid because of the sword of the angel of the LORD.*

Then David said, This is the house of the LORD God, and this is the altar of the burnt offering for Israel.

Now he knew where the temple was to be built, of a certainty he had discovered that long-predestined site of which God had said, "Here will I dwell." This was the very hill whereon Abraham offered up his son Isaac, a hill, therefore, most sacred by covenant to the living God. He delighted to remember the believing obedience of His servant, Abraham, and there He would have His temple built.

2. *And David commanded to gather together the strangers that were in the land of Israel; and he set masons to hew wrought stones to build the house of God.*

Observe here a very gracious eye to us who are Gentiles. The temple was built on the threshing floor of a Jebusite, Ornan was not of the seed of Israel, but one of the accursed Jebusites. It was his land that must be bought for the temple, and now David would employ the strangers who lived in the midst of Israel, but were not of the chosen race, to quarry the stones for the house of God. There was a place for Gentiles in the heart of God, and they had a share in the building of His temple.

3-4. *And David prepared iron in abundance for the nails for the doors of the gates, and for the joinings; and brass in abundance without weight; also cedar trees in abundance: for the Zidonians and they of Tyre brought much cedar wood to David.*

Here are the Gentiles again, the Zidonians and the men of Tyre, those that went down to the sea in ships, who had no part nor lot with Israel. They were to bring the cedar wood to David. What an opening of doors of hope there was for poor castaway Gentiles in that fact!

5. *And David said, Solomon my son is young and tender, and the house that is to be builded for the LORD must be exceeding magnificent, of fame and of glory throughout all countries: I will therefore now make preparation for it.*

This was beautiful and thoughtful on David's part. It might be too great a strain upon the young man to collect the materials for the temple as well as to build it, therefore David will take his part, and prepare the materials for the house of the Lord. If we cannot do one thing, let us do another, but somehow, let us help in the building of the church of God. The church today seems but a poor thing, but it is to be "exceeding magnificent." The glory of the world is to be the church of God, and the glory of the church of God is the Christ of God. Let us do as much as we can to build a spiritual house for our Lord's indwelling.

5-7. *So David prepared abundantly before his death.*

Then he called for Solomon his son, and charged him to build an house for the LORD God of Israel. And David said to Solomon, My son, as for me, it was in my mind to build an house unto the name of the LORD my God:

And it was well that it was in his mind. God often takes the will for the deed. If you have a large-hearted purpose in your mind, cherish it, and do your best to carry it out, but if for some reason you

should never be permitted to carry out your own ideal, it shall be equally acceptable to God, for it was in your heart.

8. *But the word of the LORD came to me, saying, Thou hast shed blood abundantly, and hast made great wars: thou shalt not build an house unto my name, because thou hast shed much blood upon the earth in my sight.*

In very much of that fighting David had been faultless, for he fought the battles of the people of God. Still, there are some things that men are called to do, for which they are not to be condemned, but they disqualify them for higher work. It was so in David's case, he had been a soldier, and he might help to build the temple by collecting the materials for it, but he must not build it.

9. *Behold, a son shall be born to thee, who shall be a man of rest;*

God's church is to be a place of rest. God's temple was built by "a man of rest."

9. *And I will give him rest from all his enemies round about: for his name shall be Solomon, and I will give peace and quietness unto Israel in his days.*

Then the house of the Lord would be built, and no stain of blood would be upon it. The only blood therein should be that of holy sacrifices, symbolical of the great Sacrifice of Christ.

10-11. *He shall build an house for my name; and he shall be my son, and I will be his father; and I will establish the throne of his kingdom over Israel for ever. Now, my son, the LORD be with thee; and prosper thou, and build the house of the LORD your God, as he hath said of thee.*

May such a blessing come upon every young man here! May the Lord be with you, my son! May the Lord prosper you, and may He make you a builder of His house in years to come!

12. *Only the LORD give thee wisdom and understanding, and give thee charge concerning Israel, that thou mayest keep the law of the LORD thy God.*

How much wisdom will be wanted by the young brethren present who hope to be builders of the house of God? When the Lord says to you, "Ask what I shall give you," ask for divine wisdom, ask to be taught of Him, and ask that you may have grace to do His will in all things.

13. *Then shalt thou prosper, if thou takest heed to fulfill the statutes and judgments which the LORD charged Moses with concerning Israel: be strong, and of good courage; dread not, nor be dismayed.*

It is a great thing for a Christian to keep his courage up, and especially for a builder of the church of God to be always brave, and with a stout heart to do God's will, come what may.

14. *Now, behold, in my trouble I have prepared for the house of the LORD an hundred thousand talents of gold, and a thousand thousand talents of silver; and of brass and iron without weight; for it is in abundance: timber also and stone have I prepared; and thou mayest add thereto.*

We are unable to tell exactly the amount of precious metal prepared by David, we have to take into account the value of gold and silver in his day, it was probably not so great as it is now. We know this much, it was an enormous sum which David had gathered for the building of the house of God.

15. *Moreover there are workmen with thee in abundance,—*

We must have the workmen, they are more precious than the gold. They cannot be put down at any sum of silver, "there are workmen with you in abundance."

15. *Hewers and workers of stone and timber, and all manner of cunning men for every manner of work.*

God will find for His church enough men, and the right sort of men, as long as He has a church to be built, but He would have us pray Him to send forth laborers. We forget that prayer, and hence we have to lament that there are so few faithful servants of God. Cry to the Lord about the lack of laborers, He can soon supply as many as are needed.

16. *Of the gold, the silver, and the brass, and the iron, there is no number. Arise therefore, and be doing, and the LORD be with thee.*

A very nice text for stirring up idle church members, who are well content with being spiritually fed, but who are doing nothing for the Lord, "Arise therefore, and be doing, and the LORD be with thee!"

17-18. *David also commanded all the princes of Israel to help Solomon his son, saying, Is not the LORD your God with you?*

What a good reason for working! What an admirable reason for giving! What an excellent reason for helping with the work! “Is not the LORD your God with you?”

18. *And hath he not given you rest on every side?*

If He gives you rest, you are to take no rest, but to get to His work. He is the best workman for God who enjoys perfect rest. It is always a pity to go out to preach or teach unless you have perfect rest towards God. When your own heart is quiet, and your spirit is still, then you can work for God with good hope of success.

18. *For he hath given the inhabitants of the land into mine hand; and the land is subdued before the LORD, and before his people.*

The fighting is over, now go ahead with your building.

19. *Now set your heart and your soul to seek the LORD your God;*

Do not go to build a house for God, and think that is all that is required. You want spiritual communion with God, and you will not do even the common work of sawing and planing and building aright unless you seek God, and are in fellowship with Him.

19. *Arise therefore, and build ye the sanctuary of the LORD God, to bring the ark of the covenant of the LORD, and the holy vessels of God, into the house that is to be built to the name of the LORD.*

May God teach us some lessons by this reading! Amen.

HYMNS FROM “OUR OWN HYMN BOOK”—423, 681, 695

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